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Farm Broadcasters Letter



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COARSE GRAINS

The world production for coarse grains for 1984/85 is estimated at a record 796.9 million tons, up 6.8 million or nearly 1 pct. from last month, and 15 pct. above last year, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Changes from last month include: In U.S., production is estimated at 237 million tons, up 4.5 million or 2 pct. from last month, and up 73 pct. from last year. South African production is estimated at 7.3 million tons, down 1.1 million or 13 pct. from last month, but 41 pct. above last year. Eastern Europe's production is estimated at a record 71.7 million tons, up 2.7 million or 4 pct. from last month.

WHEAT WORLD PRODUCTION

World production for 1984/85 is estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at a record 513.5 million tons, up 3.9 million or less than 1 pct. from last month. Important changes from a month ago include: In Australia, production is estimated at 18.5 million tons, up 1 million or 6 pct. from last month. EC production is estimated at a record 76 million tons, up 0.3 million or less than 1 pct. from last month, and 28 pct. above last year. Eastern Europe production is estimated at a record 42.2 million tons, up 2.4 million or 6 pct. from last month, and up 19 pct. from last year.

WORLD OILSEEDS

World production for 1984/85 is estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at a record 183.9 million tons, down 1.3 million or less than 1 pct. from a month ago but up 11 pct. from 1983/84. The world production for soybeans is estimated at 89.5 million tons, down 0.7 million or less than 1 pct. from last month but up 9 pct. from last year. Important changes include: U.S. production is estimated at 50.6 million tons, down 1.1 million or 2 pct. from last month but up 14 pct. from last year. In Argentina, production is estimated at 6.4 million tons, up 0.4 million or 7 pct. from last month.

USSR GRAIN SITUATION

Soviet grain purchases continued to mount over the past month, as most of the major suppliers reported at least some sales. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Soviets were far more active in the coarse grain market than in wheat. Unusually cold weather over the past couple of months likely increased the amount of grain for feed required to maintain livestock in the Soviet.

NO EXTENSION
ON SIGNUP

No extension on the 1985 acreage reduction programs' signup deadlines. That's the word from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The deadline for signing up remains March 1. Everett Rank, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, encourages farmers to sign up for the program while they work out their financing. If lack of financing is the reason for not seeding the 1985 crop, USDA will terminate those contracts by mutual agreement and without penalty.

CORN STOCKS

Corn stored in all positions on Jan. 1, 1985, is estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 5.81 billion bushels, 18 percent more than the Jan. 1, 1984 level of 4.91 billion bushels. Of the total corn on hand Jan. 1, 1985, 73 pct. or 4.25 billion bushels was stored on farms. This is 38 pct. more than the Jan. 1 farm stocks a year ago. Off-farm stocks, at 1.56 billion bushels, are down 15 pct. from last Jan. 1. Indicated disappearance from all storage positions during Oct.-Dec. 1984 totaled 2.57 billion bushels, up 8 pct. from the comparable quarter a year ago. (For information on state figures, call 202-447-3843.)

ALL WHEAT
STOCKS

All wheat stored in all positions Jan. 1, 1985, is estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 2.14 billion bushels, 8 pct. less than the 2.33 billion bushels on hand a year earlier. Of the total stocks on hand Jan. 1, 1985, 44 pct., or 933 million bushels was stored on farms. This is 8 pct. less than the Jan. 1, 1984, farm stocks. Off-farm stocks, at 1.21 billion bushels, are down 8 pct. from the Jan. 1 level a year ago. Indicated disappearance from all storage positions during Oct.-Dec. 1984, is 600 million bushels, down 5 pct. from the comparable quarter in 1983. (For information on state figures, call 202-447-3843.)

SOYBEAN
STOCKS

Soybeans in all storage positions on Jan. 1, 1985, totaled 1.42 billion bushels, up 10 pct. from Jan. 1 a year ago, but 19 pct. below Jan. 1, 1984. Off-farm stocks, at 656 million bushels, are down 2 pct. The Sept.-Dec. 1984 indicated disappearance, based on supply and Jan. 1 stocks, is 614 million bushels, down 11 pct. from the 690 million bushels disappearance during the same period a year ago. (For information on state figures, call 202-447-3843.)

EXPORTS TO
BECOME
CRUCIAL

During the next two or three decades, the domestic market for food is expected to expand less than 1 pct. per year, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. U.S. agricultural capacity, however, should grow much faster. The resulting potential for excess supplies will make the expansion of foreign markets more crucial than ever for U.S. agriculture. Today, the output from 40 pct. of harvested acres in the U.S. enters export channels, compared with 20 pct. just a decade ago. By the year 2000, 50 pct. of the harvested acreage will be exported. Even so, the U.S. share of exports--and of global output--will decline as worldwide production expands.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE "Farm Policy"...Secretary of Agriculture John Block outlines the growth of farm programs in the past few years, and how these programs have affected agriculture today. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (316)

"New Farm Management Program"...Buel Lanpher with USDA's Extension Service, focuses on some new projects being conducted by the Extension Service to assist farmers having financial problems. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (317)

"Inputs Update"...Supplies of fertilizer for 1985 are expected to be adequate, while the forecast for farm machinery is expected to stabilize. USDA economist Michael Hanthorn talks about factors contributing to this outlook. Vic Powell interviews. (318)

"U.S. Weather - Planting Options"...USDA chief meteorologist Dr. Norton Strommen offers an update on the current weather conditions in the farm belts. Vic Powell interviews. (319)

"World Grain Situation"...Scott Bleggi with USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, talks about the outlook for export markets of U.S. grains and how the competition is growing as other countries like China and India are now competing for these crops. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (320)

USSR GRAIN IMPORTS

A recent flurry of grain purchases, principally from the United States, has pushed total Soviet grain commitments from all origins to around 42 million tons against an import estimate of 50 million, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Large Soviet purchases of U.S. corn in recent weeks have pushed total coarse grain commitments from all origins to 19 million tons. Argentina is likely to sell the USSR significant quantities of corn and sorghum under their grain agreement for shipment during the late stages of the 1984/85 marketing year.

USSR WHEAT PURCHASES

The past month saw little change in the level of total Soviet wheat purchases as cancellations of U.S. wheat sales were basically offset by purchases elsewhere, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Reflecting the recent pace of Soviet wheat purchases and the expected slowdown in wheat shipments for the balance of the marketing year, the estimate of wheat shipments for the balance of the marketing year, the estimate of wheat imports for 1984/85 has been reduced by 1 million tons to 25 million. This still would be a fourth above any other year. Miscellaneous grain and rice imports are still projected at 1 million tons.

FARM WOMEN'S FORUM - APR. 24-26

"Reach Out -- Speak Up for Agriculture: Farm Policy" will be the theme for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's 5th Farm Women's Forum April 24-26. The forum is open to all women involved in agriculture. Because of space restrictions, participation will be limited to 250 on a first-come-first-served basis. For more information, contact: Farm Women's Forum, Office of the Secretary, Public Liaison, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250. Or call 202/447-2798.

OFF MIKE

A good ole Texan boy did himself proud in Oklahoma recently. Earl Sargent (KWFT, Wichita Falls, TX) recently received a one-of-a-kind meritorious service award for his long-time support of the Oklahoma Rural Electric Cooperatives. Our congratulations! ... Kelly Lenz (WIBW, Topeka, KS) NAFB SC Vice President, reports in the current issue of CHATS that Dick Yaws (WBAP, Fort Worth, TX) died of a heart attack in December ... Gene Wheatley (KWTW/KOMA, Oklahoma City, OK) reports the new meteorologist on his morning show is Nelson Robinson. But before you ask, "Is that the Nelson Robinson at USDA," let me assure you it is not. USDA's Nelson is still here in Washington and still producing his radio and TV programs for ASCS ... Eric Parsons and Gene Kendall have traded places. Eric is now at WKBT-TV in LaCrosse, WI, leaving WKTY, same city. Gene is now at WKTY, leaving WKBT-TV ... The cold weather that sneaked into the southland this winter has been causing its problems...but none as drastic as reported by John Philpot (Agri. Radio Net, Little Rock, AR). John says, "If the creek don't thaw pretty soon, I'm in trouble. I gotta take a bath and get these long johns off." And that just about says it all ... Big anniversary celebrated in Burlington, Vt. Lyn Jarvis (University of Vermont) reports the University's "Across the Fence" television show, produced five times a week at WCAX-TV, celebrated its 30th anniversary, Feb. 14. All five of the hosts and/or producers of the program during it's 30 year history gathered in Burlington for a big celebration...Lloyd Williams, Karen Kristiansson, Lyn Jarvis, Joe Chandler, and Tony Adams. May the show run another 30 years...at least!


FROM OUR RADIO
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1446...(Weekly 13. min documentary) The Department of Agriculture recently announced some revisions in its farm debt restructuring package. Brenda Curtis covers the new aid program and also explores how rural bankers feel about it.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1435...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; The electronic egg; Hog wars (the U.S. vs. Canada); Research to the people; New rules for grain reserve.

CONSUMER TIME #928...(Weekly reel of five 2½-3 min features) Salad bar hazards; Generic advertising on the rise; New fruit and vegetable horizons; Homeowners insurance--How much is enough?; Kumquats, prickly pears, etc.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Wed, Feb. 20, Outlook for exports (Also there are tentative plans for USDA to announce details of its 1985 Farm Bill proposal. If that happens, our newslines will carry coverage of it.), Thurs, Feb. 21, Catfish production report, also USDA has scheduled release of its first "commodity yearbook"--this one on wheat. Since no one has ever seen one before, we don't know if it will contain any news. If it does, we'll carry it. Fri, Feb. 22, Fruit outlook, Cattle on feed report; Mon, Feb. 25, Poultry production report; Tues, Feb. 26, Crop and weather update; Thurs, Feb. 28, Ag. prices report; Fri, Mar. 1, Livestock and poultry outlook report.


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